

TRANSEND

September 2006

A magazine for employees, retirees and stakeholders of the Arizona

INSIDE

<i>Talkin' Trash</i>	
Letter from the editor	4
<i>Motor Vehicle Division</i>	
Third Party program	5
<i>Human Resources</i>	
SECC sets state goal	6
<i>Your ticket to ride</i>	
Bus Card Plus	9



Litter-ally speaking . . .

**Cover story
on page 3**





Victor Mendez
Director

Don't Trash AZ

Arizona has a problem with litter, and the Arizona Department of Transportation is ramping up efforts to do something about it.

Don't Trash AZ is a collaborative effort between the Governor's office, ADOT, Maricopa County Association of Governments, cities and counties throughout the state, and other state agencies. It's the new rallying cry for Arizonans who are taking a stand against the debris on our streets and freeways.

Litter on our roadways is an eyesore, but more importantly, it can create unsafe driving conditions and in some cases has caused fires that have engulfed acres of our beautiful landscape.

Each month ADOT removes 4,000 - 5,000 bags of trash from the freeway system in Maricopa County alone. Last year our agency spent more than \$2 million and 74,000 hours picking up litter from 6,816 miles of freeways throughout the state.

Don't Trash AZ addresses the litter problem by increasing the emphasis on recruiting Adopt a Highway volunteers, sponsoring education in schools and airing public service announcements.

If you'd like to help with this campaign or find out more information, check out the **Don't Trash AZ** Web site located at www.azgovernor.gov/DontTrashAZ.

You'll be hearing a lot more about **Don't Trash AZ** in the coming months. It's a message worth taking to heart and sharing with your family, neighbors and friends every chance you get.

Director



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Don't Trash AZ

Keeping Arizona beautiful – With your help, we will

By Ron Loar
Editor

Ah, yes! Expansive desert vistas with century-old saguaros stretch out before us. Rugged red-rock walls cast long shadows across the desert floor. Magnificent mountains rise against an azure blue sky flocked with fleecy white clouds. Elk and deer graze in an open field just off the highway.

Beautiful, scenic Arizona – right out of the pages of *Arizona Highways* magazine.

Travel brochures, too, portray the unspoiled beauty of our state. But one trip across I-40

from Lupton to Topock, or along I-17 from Phoenix to Flagstaff will reveal a much different picture. Take a drive up Wickenburg way from Apache Junction and count the discarded aluminum cans, fast-food containers and plastic shopping bags hanging on cacti. This is not the much-heralded picturesque Southwest.

In spite of the millions of dollars that the Arizona Department of Transportation spends each year on litter removal, trash still piles up along our state highways and scenic roads. Many thanks are extended to more than 12,000 volunteers and sponsoring businesses who participate in ADOT's Adopt a Highway program, but their efforts alone are not enough. These volunteers represent 2,200 community groups, business organizations and families dedicated to picking up refuse that litters Arizona highways.

Take a look inside one of the thousands of large plastic bags used by these dedicated

Adopt a Highway sponsors receive recognition on signs along sections of highways that they sponsor.

volunteers to collect trash. Go ahead, reach in and pull out aluminum cans, broken glass, plastic bottles, Styrofoam containers, fast-food wrappers and shopping bags. Be careful though, because there are used hypodermic syringes, soiled baby diapers and discarded cigarette butts. Want to dig further into the container? We thought not.

(Continued on Page 4)

Bags of litter (left) await collection along a stretch of Interstate 10.

Adopt a Highway program volunteers gather litter along State Route 87 near Sacaton.



Keeping Arizona beautiful

(Continued from Page 3)

The single most common litter item is the cigarette butt. Over 250 billion cigarette butts are discarded in the United States annually, according to research by Butts Out at their Web site, www.buttsout.net. It can take up to 12 years for a cigarette filter to break down, so butts are not exactly biodegradable.



Fast-food wrappers, caps and lids, and soda bottles come in 2nd, 3rd and 4th, respectively, in the litany of littered items.

Uncovered loads on trucks account for a major portion of debris littering highways. Refuse being hauled without being covered and unsecured loads on pickups and flatbed trucks result in large items falling into the paths of other vehicles, causing accidents.

Certainly, Arizona is not the only state with a litter problem, but it is **our** state. We can and must lead by example and impress our children with the importance of being responsible stewards of the environment.

In the coming months you will be reading a lot more about *Don't Trash AZ*. It's a message that

TRANsend takes to heart and we think you should, too.

Our hope is that someday, we can all send scenic postcards from Arizona saying, "...The landscape is beautiful. Not an aluminum can or a cigarette butt to be seen. No plastic grocery bags snagged on cacti or fast-food containers

blowing across the scenic wonderland. The only things blowing across the highway are tumbleweeds. Wish you were here."

Come to think of it, we wish we were there, too.

Talkin' Trash A litter letter from the editor

Trash. Rubbish. Refuse. Waste.

I don't care what you call it; litter by any other name is unsightly, unhealthy and unwanted! Litter is an eyesore – a blight on our landscape. The Arizona Department of Transportation, Department of Commerce, and Office of Tourism do much to promote the beauty of our state and to attract business and vacation travelers.

Litter is costly. Each year, ADOT spends millions of dollars on litter removal along more than 6,000 miles of state highways.

Recognizing the significant problem of litter control, the editorial board of TRANsend endorses the *Don't Trash AZ* campaign. In fact, litter reduction has become this newsletter's pet project. Throughout months to come, TRANsend will be publishing articles, advertisements and reminders in order to increase awareness about the litter problem. We are planning employee involvement projects that will be detailed in a later issue.

You may become tired of reading about the litter problem – almost as tired as we are of seeing the trash, rubbish, refuse and waste that litters Arizona's landscape – but with your help, we can do much to rid our Arizona landscape of litter.

MVD Third Party program expanding

By Jim Cullison

MVD Project Support Manager

The Third Party Program of the Motor Vehicle Division is shifting into high gear to provide more customer service options after several years in neutral.

Created over a decade ago, the Third Party Program enables the Division to bring on authorized service providers – third parties – to function as MVD agents with all the authority to conduct vehicle and driver license

transactions, the same as MVD customer service offices.

Third party providers have been vital resources as Arizona's population has continued to increase. The program has been successful in offsetting a sizeable portion of the workload from MVD offices. In fiscal year 2006, third parties conducted more than 3 million transactions that otherwise would have been taken to MVD for processing. The program is so successful that it outgrew the program staff's ability to administer it and provide adequate

oversight. Because of that, no new third parties were added after 2002, until now.

The State Legislature authorized eight new positions for the program last year and another eight this year, with the directive to increase the number of third party providers from the current 61 to at least 145. Two of the

positions will be devoted to adding third parties to do vehicle inspections on vehicles transferring to Arizona from other states. The rest will supplement the staff that oversees third party providers that do title, registration and some driver license transactions.

The new positions are important because the Third Party Program staff is responsible for a range of oversight activities, such as pre-screening applicants, managing authorization agreements, training and certification, quality checking third party work, site visits, providing technical assistance, tracking performance, reconciling deposits of state funds and ensuring compliance with MVD standards.

More than doubling the number of providers to 145 is not out of sight. There's been a waiting list of companies interested in joining the program, and so far, there are 83 applicants along with requests from current providers to add a total of 55 branches to their existing third party offices. The third party staff hasn't wasted any time in revving up the program.

(Continued on Page 6)

Robert Smith (right), MVD third party implementation coordinator, talks with Josephine and Albert Galaviz of Superior Motor Vehicle Services, a third party provider, on the opening of their new branch office in Goodyear. This location was the first new third party office to open since 2002.



Sarah Wuertz to lead SECC for ADOT

Sarah Wuertz, recently appointed ADOT chairperson for the State Employee Charitable Campaign, announced that the state goal for the SECC for 2006-2007 has been set at \$1,815,409.


Wuertz, who is employee recognitions coordinator for ADOT, replaces Liz Votino in the SECC leadership role. Votino recently retired from the ADOT Public Transportation Division. In past years, Wuertz has served in various volunteer capacities with the SECC. Vicki Joralman, of the State Engineer's office, is co-chairperson for ADOT.

This year's goal represents a 1.5 percent increase over the \$1.7 million raised by the campaign last year, according to Patrick Stevens, state coordinator for SECC. The organization's focus is to increase the number of donors in order to accomplish the higher goal, Stevens said.

State kickoff events are being planned for September 13 in Phoenix and September 21 in Tucson. The campaign will end on October 31.

Now in its 16th year, the SECC has raised over \$20 million through contributions from state employees. The state employee-run campaign is conducted in partnership with the Valley of the Sun United Way and provides financial contributions for more than 600 health and human services, environmental and historical preservation agencies.

Employees have the opportunity to direct their charitable contributions to agencies of their choice. Donations are made through a payroll deduction plan or a one-time gift. Employees also have the opportunity to give to the SECC through credit or debit cards or electronic check.

Employees may pledge on-line through a secure Web site: www.secc@azdoa.gov 



The following employees attained milestones for their length of service with ADOT:

35 years

John E. Lawson, Jr., ITD, Geotechnical Design

30 years

Stella Boeta, MVD, Motor Carrier and Tax Services

25 years

Henry Surzyn, TSG, Page Equipment Services

20 years

Maria C. Brackett, MVD, Tucson North
Marlene Gray, ITD, Urban Acquisition
Karen K. Harmon, MVD, Training


Third Party program

Continued from Page 5)

Becoming a third party is an exacting process. Applicants have to submit a business plan for approval, and their application goes before a selection panel consisting of MVD assistant directors. The panel considers such factors as the applicant's business experience and plan, location with proper zoning and anticipated workload.

"We take the selection and authorization process seriously," says Mickie Franklin, third party program manager. "We want third parties to be good representatives of MVD and have a high potential for success."

The scrutiny doesn't stop with the selection panel approval. The applicant also has to pass a site inspection. The facility must have a security system with motion detectors, a secure storage area and a safe for accountable inventory. Workstations have to be positioned so the screens are not visible to the public. A price list must be prominently displayed, and external signage must meet MVD specifications.

"Expansion of the program is a big undertaking and a lot of work, but in the long run our third party partners will help manage MVD growth demands even more and give customers another alternative for doing business with us," says Franklin. 

Wilhelmsen to address Governor's Housing Forum in Tucson

In horse racing terms, a trifecta bet is difficult to win, but it yields very high returns. Bettors have to pick the top three finishers, in order, to win.

In the realm of affordable housing, planners are similarly tasked. At the Governor's Housing Forum, being held in Tucson September 6-8,



Communication and Community Partnerships Director Shannon Wilhelmsen will speak on transportation's role in the development of affordable housing.

The Rural Development Trifecta session will address the topic of meeting rural Arizona's transportation, water

Shannon Wilhelmsen

and telecommunications needs. Wilhelmsen will be part of a three-person panel that includes representatives from Qwest Communications and the Arizona Water Institute.



STATS Safety Talk and Tidbits

Seat belts – your life depends on them

By Sonya Herrera

Safety and Health Administrator

Whether you're driving a state vehicle or your own personal automobile, use of seat belts is mandatory. It's the law. I'm troubled by the number of ADOT employees I've observed not wearing their safety belts; therefore, I'm asking all of you to be vocal in getting the message out: "Safety belts save lives."

Don't be concerned about offending passengers by asking them to wear their safety belts. If necessary, share with them a personal example of how someone not wearing a safety belt affected your life. It sometimes takes a true story to make a significant impact on people. If a fellow employee refuses to wear a safety belt, let your supervisor or manager know.

It's a sad fact: About half of the 40,000 people who die each year in vehicle crashes would have survived if only they had been wearing their safety belts. Don't become one of those statistics.

Why are safety belts so important?

Consider this: Upon impact, a vehicle stops within the first tenth of a second. Unbelted passengers keep going until they slam into something such as a windshield, a steering wheel, or the pavement. The force is incredible.

At only 30 miles per hour, the impact is the same as if the passenger had fallen out of a three-story window.

How do safety belts work?

Safety belts distribute the force of sudden impact over the strongest areas of your body such as your hips, shoulders and chest. The safety belt also stretches slightly during a sudden impact, which allows you to come to a more gradual stop during the crash.

The lap portion of a belt should always be adjusted so that it is low and snug across the lap area (pelvic bone). Never allow it to sit across your stomach because the belt could cause internal damage during a crash.

The shoulder portion of a belt should be adjusted so that it is snug and across your chest and collarbones. It should never be placed behind your back or under your arm, especially if you are in a vehicle with air bags. You also need to be at least 10 inches away from where the air bag is stored.

Even if you are just making a short trip, wear your safety belt. Seventy-five percent of vehicle crashes occur within 25 miles of home.

You can't control how other people drive, but you can buckle up to maximize your protection. Do your part and buckle up. Your family and ADOT need you.

For more information on safety belts, check out the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration Safety Pages: www.nhtsa.gov.

Stay safe.



Arizona Governor Janet Napolitano and Sonora, Mexico, Governor Eduardo Bours wave ceremonial flags signifying the opening of the new FAST Lanes. Other dignitaries from both sides of the international border participated in the event.

Photos by Dave McDarby

Commercial carriers line up in a queue waiting to enter the United States from Mexico. Two additional FAST Lanes will speed processing of freight across the border.


FAST Lanes dedicated at Mariposa Port of Entry

Two new lanes at the Mariposa Port of Entry in Nogales, Arizona, will speed screening of commercial carriers coming into the United States from Mexico. Aptly dubbed FAST (Free And Secure Trade) Lanes, the additional lanes will double the amount of traffic processed and significantly reduce the wait time at the border.

Arizona Governor Janet Napolitano and Sonora, Mexico, Governor Eduardo Bours recently led dignitaries from both sides of the border in a well-attended dedication ceremony.

Serving as emcee, ADOT Director Victor Mendez told the crowd, “FAST – better than any other word – explains how these new commercial lanes function and why they are needed. At the border between the U.S. and Mexico, we are positioned at the center of the CANAMEX corridor. We are also at the gateway of one of the world’s great produce-growing regions.

“The state of Sonora is blessed with microclimates that give growers year-round opportunities for harvesting crops – fruits and vegetables – that are consumed in homes and restaurants across the United States. The faster these perishable goods can be transported to market, the better.”

The two new FAST Lanes are fitted with weigh-in-motion sensors and an automatic vehicle identification system that will speed the processing of approximately 1,200 trucks through the Mariposa Port of Entry every day. 



You've got a ticket to ride

By **Ron Loar**
Editor

Here's a terrific way to save money, avoid the hassle of driving in rush-hour traffic and benefit the environment if you live in Maricopa County and work for ADOT.

The State of Arizona pays 65 percent of the cost of bus fare for nearly 2,000 ADOT employees who ride the bus to work in Maricopa County. "You, too, can enjoy the savings and avoid driving in rush-hour traffic while doing your part to reduce air pollution," says Abigail Williams, program administrator for Capitol Rideshare. "That's like getting a pay raise and saving money on your gasoline bill. An added benefit to riding the bus to work is that you'll reduce wear and tear on your vehicle."

Capitol Rideshare soon will begin distributing updated cards to employees already participating in the program. Cardholders will receive new bus passes through the ADOT Human Resource office before September 25th, according to Mark Pearsall of ADOT's Public Transportation Division. "If you currently have a *Bus Card Plus* card, you may have noticed that it will expire on September 25. The renewal process is automatic," says Pearsall. "You do not need to fill out an application. You do not need to call anyone. You do not need to tell anyone. You do not need to verify you are on a

list. You do not need to fill out any form. You just need to sit back, relax, and the new *Bus Card Plus* card will automatically come to you from the Human Resources office on or shortly after September 14th."

Pearsall says that bus cardholders will need to use their current card up through September 25th.

The new card will not work until September 26th.

Employees who do not yet have their own *Bus Card Plus* may apply at the Human Resources office or by logging on to the Capitol Rideshare Web site listed below. There is no fee for the application, and the cost of the bus rides will be deducted from your second paycheck each month. At no time will the total monthly fare exceed the cost of a monthly bus pass.


The Capitol Rideshare program also coordinates other beneficial travel reduction programs such as telecommuting, car and van pools, and ride-match listings, whereby the program matches commuters' schedules for shared rides.

"Driving to work alone is costly and time-consuming, not to mention the traffic congestion and air pollution that it causes," says Williams. "When you realize what is at stake, it may help you reconsider your transit options. The



pollution costs are extreme, and the financial costs get higher by the day. Take a look at the bottom line – you might just improve your own."

Capitol Rideshare is operated by the Arizona Department of Administration and is funded by the Federal Highway Administration through the Maricopa Association of Governments and by the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality.

As an ADOT employee living in Maricopa County, you are entitled and encouraged to participate in the bus card subsidy program. Sign up for your very own bus card and pocket the savings on your commute to work. Soon, you will be singing your own version of the old Beatles' tune, "I've Got a Ticket to Ride. . ." 

For more information about any of the Capitol Rideshare programs

(602) 542-RIDE
www.capitolrideshare.com

Retirements from ADOT

Employees retiring from ADOT recently, as reported by Human Resources, include:

Thomas D. Boone, 8 years, MVD, Central Drivers License Production

David A. Dennis, 17 years, ITD, Prescott District

Nyla Dieble, 17 years, MVD, Enforcement Services

Susan J. Hilkey, 32 years, MVD, Customer Service

Sandra L. Holt, ITD, 15 years, District-wide Maintenance

John Pein, TPD, 18 years, State and Regional Planning Section

John D. Ritchie, 16 years, MVD, Competitive Government Partnerships

Val Carrola wins ADOT golf tourney

Val Carrola, coordinator for ADOT's Highway Expansion and Extension Program (HELP) Technical Committee, says that golf is a lot like life – "Some days you just can't get it going; then your opponent has a bad day and you edge ahead." That's how he explains winning the ADOT Golf Guild's Match Play Championship this summer.

Carrola beat out 15 other qualifiers to walk away with a trophy, cash prize and bragging rights in the tournament played at Orange Tree Resort in Scottsdale. "Lucky for me I played well. . . . Unfortunately for my opponent, he had a bad day and I edged him out by one stroke."

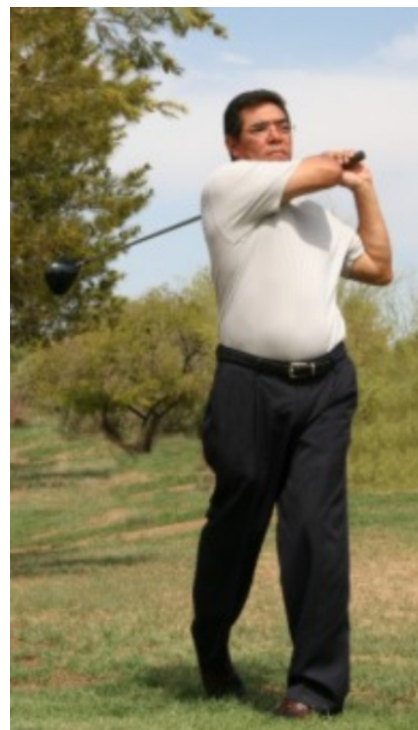
There are approximately 80 members in the ADOT Golf Guild, of which Deputy State Engineer Dan Lance is president.

Carrola started playing golf relatively late in life after an older fellow employee challenged him to a game. At the age of 37, Val had never held a golf club. He had been a weight lifter and recreational boxer, but had never developed

an interest in golf. In a bit of male posturing, 72-year-old Richard Thompson of Engineering Records challenged him, "So, you think you're a tough guy." Carrola recalls defending his 'honor' with a typical male response, and the challenger retorted, "Well, there's one thing I can beat you at – golf." After Thompson taught Val how to grip a club properly and gave him a golf instruction book, as well as a set of used clubs, the novice spent several weeks practicing.

Before they had a chance to play a round of golf, however, Thompson died. Carrola affectionately speaks of his golf mentor as 'Gramps' and is grateful for the challenge and encouragement that the elderly man gave him.

With his winnings, Carrola is purchasing memorial bricks to be placed in the courtyard of the ADOT Administration building. The memorial bricks are in honor of four of his deceased co-workers, Joe Martinez, Richard Perez, Jim Ingram, and, as you might have guessed, 'Gramps' Thompson.



Val Carrola

Comments and Kudos

ADOT maintenance personnel frequently offer roadside assists to motorists experiencing vehicle breakdowns along Arizona highways. Appreciative drivers send these letters.

Lillie Amonse of Fallbrook, California, wrote to express her gratitude for assistance from David Miller, Yuma District maintenance supervisor.

Dear ADOT,

While traveling alone on I-10 west of Tonopah, my car had a flat tire. I pulled off the road and called the Auto Club. (It was scary how close the 18-wheelers were.) After waiting 45 minutes, David Miller, your highway maintenance supervisor, stopped to help. He pulled his truck behind my car and turned on his flashing lights. He changed my tire and helped me on my way.

His thoughtfulness, kindness and consideration made an unpleasant experience not so bad. Mr. Miller was professional and very helpful. Many people passed me that day, but he chose to take the time to help a stranger.

I won't forget him and want to let you know how much I appreciate what he did for me.

*Sincerely,
Lillie Amonse*

Dell Dodge, Seligman Maintenance, was commended for his assistance to a motorist and her family who were stranded along a remote section of I-40 in Coconino County:

To whom it may concern:

I was recently traveling in [the vicinity of Seligman] when my car broke down. Fortunately Dell Dodge happened to be in the same area and came by to see if I needed any help. He even went out of his way to get my children and me some water.

You don't find too many good citizens like this man anymore. I would like you to know what a good employee you have.

Sincerely,

Ms. Candace Hall

Bill Boyd says that cable barriers in the medians of Loop 202 prevented his vehicle from becoming involved in a head-on collision:

I would like to thank your department for the placement of the cables on the Santan [Loop 202]. On July 31st I was eastbound on the 202 and blew a front tire on my [pickup truck]. I was on the inside lane and it pulled me straight to the cables. I suffered no injuries but my truck is a mess.

It is my belief that without the cables being in place, I would have been collided with the westbound traffic and many more vehicles would have been involved, with injuries and maybe fatalities. I walked away without a

scratch. I don't know how many letters like this you get, but I think sometimes its nice to hear good things back from the public.

Again, thanks

Bill Boyd

A citizen passes along this comment about lane expansion work along US 60 in the East Valley:

I just to want to thank all the workers that are working on the expansion of US 60. I drive it to work from Gold Canyon to Mesa and cannot believe how well things have gone.

There are some delays, but they are not caused by the construction. They are caused by some of the idiot drivers on the road. It blows my mind to see these crews working on the side of the highway with all the traffic going by, and not causing any delays in our commute.

Kudos to all the crew members for doing such a great job. I look forward to the completion and using the expanded highway.

Thanks again!

Judi